

# A FREE AND EQUAL PARLIAMENT FOR ENGLAND.

TO THE PRINCIPAL LAND-HOLDERS OF ENGLAND, AND TO THE PRINCIPAL CITIZENS OF LONDON.

## GENTLEMEN.

A More equal Representation of the People of England in Parliament hath long appeared to me to be the ONLY constitutional Means of saving this Nation; and there was a Time when I hoped, that such a Representation would have given, not only Stability and Safety to the THRONE, but *Prosperity and Happiness to the PEOPLE.*

I therefore engag'd several Months in forming those Parliamentary Tables which were printed, in March 1771, on H. of a Sheet of Paper; and reprinted, in March 1773, in the same Size and Form, & also having for Title, "The Rotten and Tottering State of the popular Part of the British Constitution infeazitated."

But those promising Hopes which so early budded and bloomed, in the Minds of all Orders of Men, soon faded and disappeared, leaving them to find out that they had been dreaming; and were waked by a destroying North Wind, ONLY to see it strip from the Imperial Crown of their Realms those Laurels whereupon a glorious Train of Victories had adorned it.

All which hath been effected with an ignominious Rapidity, that high and low, rich and poor, ALL FELL TO GROUND, a Hurting of this Nation from the Summit of Honour and Safety into the Sink of *Want and Danger.*

And then our Ministers of State are answerable, in Law, for their unrelenting Perseverance in Councils and Measures which Events did, Year after Year, loudly proclaim to be alike ruinous and wicked; the Majority of ye are answerable to their Children—to their Country—and, to that unerring *Guiding, Just, and Executive, CONSCIENCE*—for their having either promoted or not opposed such Councils and Measures.

Both the Pension crav'g and Bauble hunting Parts of that Majority have indeed already been so far ruined, either for their active Iniquity or their passive Folly, that such of them as are too far gone to rouse their Feelings, may outwardly FEEL in a Failure of their *Rents, Resources, and Income*, what it is to make a loss of that Confidence which GOD gave to all Men for a Guide.

Under Circumstances so awfully instructive, the well-meaning among ye act wisely in turning their Thoughts towards a more equal Representation of the People of England in Parliament; because ruinous Councils and Measures could not have ROBBED us of HALF our Dominions, Maritime Trade, and Naval Power, and of ALL our Allies, if rotten Majorities had not supported such Councils and Measures.

The People of England, therefore, must be represented in Parliament by Men in whom other Nations and States can both trust and confide, before they will place either Trust or Confidence in thi. Nation; because the all-ruining Law of self-preservation ever did, and WILL FORBID both Nations and private Men to let either their own Safety or Welfare depend on those *who are not to be depended upon.*

It is the all-ruining Law that now forbids the Dutch to give us that stipulated Affiance, which their own Safety would have put them upon offering, *without Treaty*, to able and honest British Ministers; But they see that wicked and weak Councils and Measures have nearly drowned us, and thereby made their own Safety depend up in their breaking a Treaty to prevent their being drowned along with us.

And it was the same all-ruining Law that lately put the Empress of Russia upon sending us a Declaration of Neutrality; though there may be a farther View in her arming to maintain such Neutrality, if she finds, by a longe Perseverance in ruinous Councils and Measures here, that we are become unworthy of any better Fate than that of having our Dominions shared among other Powers, as those of Poland lately were.

In short, we are no longer at Liberty to chuse what we will do; but MUST either have such a Parliament as other Nations can fairly trust; or we shall for no cause to be a People; for a deep-rooted Corruption hath so clogged and weakened all the Wheels of Government, that if the great CECIL was to come into the World again, he would not be able to save us, without a *fresh chuse and more equal Parliament.*

It therefore is happy FOR ALL, that Precedent in Scotland hath shut the Door against private Opinions concerning a more equal Parliamentary Representation in England; for it appears by the Treaty of Union, and by the Laws made to confirm it (all of which may be found in Statute 5th of Q. Anne, Chap. 8.) that the Rights and Privileges of the Scotch Boroughs were to remain intire, but that instead of 66 they were to send only 15 Representatives to Parliament.

How it happens that a Precedent of such vast Importance is not followed upon the present Occasion, I cannot tell; but I know that I mentioned it in my 3d Letter to Junius, dated 6th of August 1772; and that it bars all Pleas against making a similar Reduction in the Number of English Borough Representatives, to make Room for a proper Increase in the Number of English Knights of the Shire.

For the Boroughs of Scotland do each of them still chuse a Representative, as they did before the Union; but it is only to represent each Borough at a second Election, wherein the Sixty-five Persons so chosen do elect Fourteen Members to represent all the said Boroughs in Parliament; excepting Edinburgh, which is allowed, by the Scotch Law, that fixes the Representation, to always send one Member.

Thus, fr. the Treaty of Union, and the Laws whereby it is confirmed, mark out the Course that true Wisdom and sound Policy require us to take, towards obtaining a more equal Parliamentary Representation; for we have an undoubted Right to reform our Part of the Parliament, as the Scotch, at the Union, reformed theirs; and I hope that none of ye will persevere in attempting to do more.

For the Conduct of Russia and Holland forbids us to hope for Affiance from any foreign Power, until we have such a Parliament as other Nations and States can safely trust; and we are all to consider, that other Nations will not trust a new Parliament, until a vigorous Pursuit of wise Councils and Measures hath proved, that it is *worthy of being joyned.*

All which will unavoidably take up so much Time, that I think ye will act wisely for your Country and for yourselves, by immediately entering into County-Associations for the SOLE Purpose of obtaining a more equal Parliamentary Representation; and I must beg Leave to submit to your Consideration, the following Plan, short, and unexceptionable Terms of Association.

" We whoe Nations are hereunto subscriv'd, being Freeholders or taxed House-holders of the County of \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby afficte to do, and to concur in the doing of, all that may lawfully be done towards obtaining a more equal Representation of the People of England in Parliament; similar to that obtained for Scotland, when the Two Kingdoms were united."

An Association, with such a Preamble, was, to my certain Knowledge, begun in London, Two Years ago, by such principal Citizens as might most properly begin it there; but upon mentioning the Matter to a Number of respectable Citizens, it appeared, that only a Few of them had THEN *affectionately* set to the Rectitud and Nicessity of their following so proper a Leading.

The Tables No. II and III, herewith printed, will shew ye, all the present Inequalities of County and City or Borough Representation; in the Tables No. IV and V will shew ye, what Number of County and City or Borough Representatives each County now hath, and what Number thereof each County should have, upon a more equal Representation throughout England.

All which I, with much trouble, determined, near Twenty Years ago, by a Manuscript Account in the Collection of state Papers, made by the Right Honorable Charles Montagu, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Reign of King William, and afterwards created Earl of Halifax; of which I here take Notice, that ye may know upon what Foundation those Tables stand.

And as to all that can be said, about the present Number of taxable Houses in England being much altered, one Way or other, in most Counties, from what it was in the Reign of King William; I have only to answer, that these Tables may very well serve at this perilous Crisis; and that when Times of Peace and Safety cease, it will be Time enough to make better Tables.

For we ought, first of all, to agree and determine for ENGLAND (as the Scotch Parliament, by their Act for regulating Parliamentary Representation, wisely agreed and determined for SCOTLAND) that Two Thirds of our Representatives shall be chosen for the Shires, and One Third thereof for the Cities and Boroughs.

Not much because the Scotch have done so for Scotland; but chiefly because the Landed Interest of England is to the Trading Interest there, nearly in the Proportion of TWO to ONE, as my Tables do sufficiently shew; and partly because such a Determination will FOR EVER prevent either of those Interests from increasing on the other, in Parliamentary Representation.

To which I must add, that if all the open Market-Towns of each County were to vote along with the Cities or Boroughs thereof, the whole would, upon a more equal Representation, have a Right to no more Representatives than are expressed by the Figures placed against the Names of the several Counties, in the Column B. of Table No. V, herewith printed.

And I am sure that no sound Reason can be given, for taxed House-holders having Votes in some Towns, and not in others; because their contributing equally to the Support of Government, gives them an equal Right to vote for Members of Parliament; more especially as having little or no Property doth not disqualify other Men from so voting.

But until paying Scut and bearing Lot, or having Stock or other Effects to a certain Value, be made an universal Qualification to vote for City or Borough Representatives, (as having Forty Shillings, or more, a Year from Lands long hath been for Freeholders to vote at County Elections) it will be in Vain for any Man to aim at Correctness, in making Tables for City and Borough Representation.

I therefore must again advise ye, to proceed according to these Tables; but to allot to each of the Thirty least improved Counties, one Knight of the Shire less than is specified in Col. B. of Tab. 4, and to allot to each of the Thirty Counties where Manufactures have most increased since the glorious Revolution, one City or Borough Representative more than is put down in Col. B. of Tab. 5.

To the End that the Number of the former may be (342) double the Number of the latter (171) and the Total of both be, as it now is, Five Hundred and Thirteen—and, to this greatest of all Ends, that ye may not continue writing and debating about new Opinions and many Things, until that *DESTRUCTION* which now hangs heavily over our Heads, BURSTS DOWN UPON ALL.

9th May, 1780.

J. MASSIE.

## NO. LXVI.

## NO. II.

The Number of taxable Houses in Country or Village Parishes, to each County Representative now sent to Parliament.

	A	B
	No. Houses to each Representative	Indexes or Exponents
Rutland	971	1
Flint	1,009	1
Westmoreland	1,070	1
Monmouth	2,203	2
Huntington	2,360	2
Merioneth	2,403	2
Cardigan	2,608	2
Radnor	2,678	2
Denbigh	2,782	2
Carnarvon	3,137	3
Bedford	3,250	3
Northumberland	3,272	3
Pembroke	3,289	3
Cumberland	3,289	3
Carmarthen	3,431	3
Durham	3,620	3
Brecknock	4,039	4
Montgomery	4,211	4
Worcester	4,348	4
Oxford	4,412	4
Warwick	4,495	4
Bucks	4,587	4
Buckingham	4,627	4
Hereford	4,678	4
Nottingham	4,699	4
Leicester	4,818	4
Cornwall	5,012	5
Anglesea	5,097	5
Surrey	5,210	5
Hartford	5,359	5
Derby	5,402	5
Glamorgan	5,480	5
Stafford	5,521	5
Middlesex	6,025	6
Northampton	6,124	6
Salop	6,270	6
Chelten	6,374	6
Suffex	6,425	6
Dorset	6,836	7
Wilts	7,300	7
Southampton	7,871	8
Kent	7,873	8
Gloucester	8,121	8
Suffolk	10,939	11
Norfolk	11,117	11
Lancaster	11,155	11
Efex	11,178	11
Lincoln	12,800	13
Somerter	13,841	14
Devon	15,695	16
York	30,470	31

According to the Constitution of *England*, every Freshholder therein is understood to have, and to exercise by his Representative, an equal Right and Share of Concern in making Laws, laying Taxes, appropriating public Monies, &c. But that great Right, upon which the Preservation of Liberty and Property doth fundamentally depend, is so far warped from Equality, that One Freshholder in the County of *Rutland* hath, by his Representative, as great a Share in making Laws, laying Taxes, appropriating public Monies, &c. as 2, 3, 4, 5, &c. to 31 Freshholders in other Counties have by their Representatives. And the Holders of taxed Houses in the Cities and Market Towns of different Counties, are represented in a far more unequal Manner, though they contribute equally to the Support of Government by their Puries and Swords; for One such Householder in the County of *Cornwall* hath, by his Representative, as great a Share in making Laws, laying Taxes, appropriating public Monies, &c. as 2, 3, 4, 5, &c. to 165 such Householders in other Counties have by their Representatives. All which Disproportions are expressed by the Figures called *Indexes or Exponents* in the Columns B. B.

## NO. IV.

The Number of Knights of the Shire which now represent the Freeholders of each County in Parliament, and the Number of such Knights whereby the said Freeholders should be so represented.

	A	B
	Present Number	True Numbr.
Bedford	2	4
Bucks	2	6
Buckingham	2	6
Cambridge	2	6
Chelten	2	8
Cornwall	2	6
Derby	2	7
Devon	2	19
Dorset	2	8
Durham	2	5
Efex	2	14
Gloucester	2	10
Hartford	2	7
Hereford	2	6
Huntington	2	3
Kent	2	10
Lancaster	2	14
Leicester	2	6
Lincoln	2	16
Middlesex	2	8
Monmouth	2	5
Norfolk	2	14
Northampton	2	7
Northumberland	2	4
Nottingham	2	6
Oxford	2	6
Rutland	2	1
Salop	2	8
Somerset	2	17
Southampton	2	10
Stafford	2	7
Suffolk	2	13
Surrey	2	7
Suffex	2	8
Warwick	2	5
Westmoreland	2	3
Wilts	2	9
Worcester	2	6
York	2	37
Anglesea	1	3
Brecknock	1	3
Cardigan	1	2
Carmarthen	1	2
Carnarvon	1	2
Denbigh	1	2
Flint	1	1
Glamorgan	1	4
Merioneth	1	2
Montgomery	1	3
Pembroke	1	2
Radnor	1	1

Knights of the Shire { now sent 92 . . . . . Representatives . . . . . should be sent . . . . . 372

In these two States, the true Number of Knights of the Shire, and the true Number of City or Market Town Representatives, which each County ought to send to Parliament, are determined by the Number of taxable Houses to each Representative, upon a general Medium throughout all *England* and *Wales*; which Medium Number of Houses is 1,637; but upon looking into several printed Poll-Books for County Elections, and upon making various Inquiries concerning other Counties, I find, that the general Number of Freeholders is to the Number of taxable Houses in Village or County Parishes, in the Proportion of *One to Three*; so that the Medium Number of Freeholders to each Knight of the Shire, when 372 such Knights shall be elected, would be about 500, scarcely varying either Way, excepting in the County of *Kent*, where the ancient Saxon Custom of *Carew-Kind* has increased the Number of Freeholders to near *One Half* the Number of taxable Houses.

## NO. III.

The Number of taxable Houses in Cities or Market Towns, to each City or Borough Representative now sent to Parliament.

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